

6'41A

The RIPOSTE

FEBRUARY

VOL. 6

NO. 1



Joseph Vince

*invites you to inquire about his new inventories
of fencing equipment*

NEW DESIGNS
NEW PATTERNS
IMPROVED QUALITY

THESE ARTICLES SHOULD APPEAL TO EVERY ACTIVE FENCER

Write for our descriptive literature



SALLE D'ARMES VINCE
AND
VINCE FENCING EQUIPMENT, CO.

767 BROADWAY
(East 9th Street)

NEW YORK CITY

Telephone GRamercy 7-8120

PAN AMERICAN FENCING COMMITTEES

Because of the cancellation of Olympic Games for an indefinite period, amateur sportsmen in the Western Hemisphere have organized the Pan American Games for International Sports Competition among the countries of North and South America. Each sport must organize its own Committees to act toward the Pan American Games organization in the same capacity as the Olympic Games Committees functioned toward the National Olympic Committees.

The A. F. L. A., the N. C. A. A. and the A. A. U. have recently appointed the following fencing committees:

Pan American Fencing Committee—Miguel A. de Capriles, Derneln Every, Dr. Graeme M. Hammond, Dr. John R. Huffman, Leon M. Schoonmaker and Harold Van Buskirk.

Fencing Advisory Committee—Norman C. Armitage, Edward Carfagno, George Cochrane, Ferard Leicester, Dr. Frank A. Riebel and Frank S. Righeimer, Jr.

A. F. L. A. NOMINATIONS

The A. F. L. A. Nominating Committees for the National Officers and for the Non-Divisional Governors for the ensuing year have filed their nominations to be voted upon at the next National Meeting of the League and of the Non-Divisional Members thereof, respectively. Nominations are as follows:

NATIONAL OFFICERS

Dr. John R. Huffman	- - - -	President
Dr. Royall H. Snow	- - -	1st Vice-President
Mr. Ferard Leicester	- - -	2nd Vice-President
Mr. Richard F. Warren	- - -	3rd Vice-President
Dr. Ervin S. Acel	- - - -	Secretary
Mr. George Cochrane	- - - -	Treasurer

NON-DIVISIONAL GOVERNORS

Dr. Norman C. Armitage	Mr. Edward Egan
Mr. Miguel A. de Capriles	Mrs. Dolly Funke
Mr. Robert Driscoll	Mr. Ralph E. Marson
Mr. Pieter Mijer	

TO PROMOTE WOMEN'S FENCING

The National Section of Women's Athletics, a branch of the American Association for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, has recently organized a fencing committee, naming Frederica Bernhard chairman. Miss Bernhard is instructor of fencing for women at the University of California.

The purpose of the new committee is to further women's fencing in schools and colleges. Inexperienced teachers will be assisted to improve their coaching technique; physical education departments will be advised about rule books and informed as to the aims and character of the A. F. L. A.

N. Y. A. C. ANNUAL INVITATION FOIL CONTEST

The New York Athletic Club Invitation Foil Contest held during the Christmas holidays each year and limited exclusively to collegiate fencers was won this year on December 21st by Gerald Cetrulo of Seton Hall College. Arthur Tauber of New York University was second and Stanley Levy, also of N. Y. U., was third.

DIRECTORY OF AMERICAN FENCING PROFESSIONALS

In publishing the Directory of Professionals in our last issue we realized that it would be necessary to make many changes in the names listed at that time. In fact, we requested the help of our subscribers in making suggestions in this regard. We were surprised to receive as few letters as we did for, after all, this was the first list of its kind ever published, and subject to many errors of both commission and omission.

Some of the errors of our list deserve special apology. Of these the first that come to mind were the omission of the names of Douglas P. Boyea and Maxwell Garrett. We were especially embarrassed about this for these men were mentioned as professionals in other pages of the same issue. Apparently one Riposte page doesn't know what the other pages are doing.

Our most grievous fault was the inclusion of many amateur coaches as professionals. In some cases our listing has proved embarrassing to these amateurs in entering competitions. We have apologized in personal letters to several of these men and trust that all fencers will take the pains to delete their names, as requested, from the December listing.

We submit the following changes to our former list:

To Be Deleted

James Ashley, Berkeley, Calif.
 Dr. Scott D. Breckinridge, Lexington, Ky.
 Truman W. Clark, San Francisco, Calif.
 Edward Houser, San Francisco, Calif.
 Abraham A. Hurwitz, Baltimore, Md.
 Arthur Lane, San Francisco, Calif.
 J. Rulon Poole, Provost, Utah.
 Dr. Frank A. Riebel, Columbus, Ohio.
 Harry J. Smith, Ames, Iowa.
 George K. Vapaa, Harrington, Del.

To Be Added

Constance Baum, Columbia, Mo.
 Frederica Bernhard, Berkeley, Calif.
 Frederick Boswell, Wellesley, Mass.
 Douglas P. Boyea, West Springfield, Mass.
 Robert H. Bradbury, Jr., Philadelphia, Pa.
 Harriet Clark, Cambridge, Mass.
 Frank A. Del Pino, Harrisburg, Pa.
 Mrs. Wallace Dow, Baltimore, Md.
 Stella Fox, New York City.
 Frank Freck, Berkeley, Calif.
 Maxwell R. Garrett, Chicago, Ill.
 Olga Kulbitzky, New York City.
 Jane Lawyer, Urbana, Ill.
 George Lipps, Indianapolis, Ind.
 Lucille Lowry, Wellesley, Mass.
 Capt. S. G. MacPherson, New York City.
 Vivian Osborn, Saratoga Springs, N. Y.
 Helen L. Russell, Madison, Wis.
 Verrel A. Weber, San Francisco, Calif.
 Eugene C. Williams, Chicago, Ill.
 Tooley E. Williamson, Austin, Texas.

Changed Addresses

Orest Meykar, St. Louis, Mo.
 Gail Potter, Hollywood, Calif.
 Guy M. Shockley, address unknown.
 Gervase C. Thomas, Chicago, Ill.
 Capt. Charles Vical, New York City.

THE RIPOSTE*America's Oldest Fencing Magazine*

114 Washington Place - New York City

JOSE R. DE CAPRILES - - - - - *Founder*
 DERNELL EVERY - - - - - *Editor*
 WARREN A. DOW - - - - - *Business Manager*
 MIGUEL A. DE CAPRILES - - - - - *Technical Advisor*

CONTRIBUTING STAFF

WILLIAM F. STROBEL - - - - - *Special Writer*
 ROY S. TINNEY - - - - - *Special Writer*
 HANNS FISCHER - - - - - *Illinois*
 FLOYD TRAYNHAM, JR. - - - - - *Illinois*
 CHARLES H. HIRST - - - - - *New Jersey*
 FERARD LEICESTER - - - - - *Northern California*
 ROY S. BURRELL - - - - - *Philadelphia*
 ALAN BECK - - - - - *St. Louis*
 OREST MEYKAR - - - - - *St. Louis*
 FRED LINKMEYER - - - - - *Southern California*
 VIRGINIA WESTLAKE - - - - - *Utah*
 DOUGLAS P. BOYEA - - - - - *Western Massachusetts*

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

6 Issues \$1.00
 12 Issues \$2.00

THIS IS ISSUE # 60

Mailed on or about February 24th

C O N T E N T S

Pan American Fencing Committees.....	Page 1
A. F. L. A. Nominations	Page 1
To Promote Women's Fencing	Page 1
N. Y. A. C. Annual Invitation Foil Contest.....	Page 1
Directory of American Fencing Professionals.....	Page 1
Editorial	Page 2
The New Rules Book—Sidelights and Comments	Page 3
Another Point of View	Page 6
An Essay on Sportsmanship	Page 7
The Professional Problem—Part One	Page 10
Northern California News	Page 12
Modern Hoplitcs	Page 13
Philadelphia News	Page 13
New Jersey News	Page 13
Southern California News	Page 14
Utah News	Page 14
Gossip and More	Page 14
St. Louis News	Page 15
Illinois News	Page 15
A. F. L. A. Competitions in N. Y. C.....	Page 16
Western Massachusetts News	Page 16

EDITORIAL

As the result of suggestions from subscribers we have undertaken a gradual change in emphasis within our magazine. We have reduced the stress upon the reporting of competitions and have increased the use of articles. Although competitions will still be reported, their space allowance will be limited and the results will be presented more for record value than for detailed news accounts.

We are indebted to Mr. William A. Strobel and Mr. Roy S. Tinney for articles this issue. We also present another article on the new rulesbook by M. A. de Capriles, our technical advisor, and two general articles by the Editor. We hope that more and more fencers will volunteer to furnish us with articles or material for such. We also hope that our subscribers will feel free to comment on these writings, expressing their preferences as to type of material for future issues.

X X

This issue was originally planned for publication in late January. We must depend, however, upon the voluntary work of our staff. Sickness has laid up some of our staff members and heavy January work has caused the remaining delay. Full days, evenings and week ends in the office make the Editor blush for the small amount of time that he has been able to devote to *The Riposte*. Fortunately, we sell the magazine on the basis of number of issues rather than for any specific calendar period. All subscribers will receive full subscriptions although no promise is made as to time of completion. Cheer up. It now looks as though the next several issues will reach you with some regularity.

X X

The speeding up of defense is already affecting our mailing lists. Capt. Fred Siebert, National Epee Champion, is already at camp, as announced in our last issue. Our last year's National Foil Champion, Norman Lewis, will be leaving for camp soon. Ralph Marson, ranking sabreman and former National Junior Foil Champion, is with the New York State Militia and liable to call at a moment's notice.

THE NEW RULES BOOK—SIDELIGHTS AND COMMENTS

II—THOSE PESKY CLASSIFICATIONS

BY MIGUEL A. DE CAPRILES

Chairman of A.F.L.A. and I.C.F.A. Rules Committees

Among the hundreds of letters on the A.F.L.A. Rules which I have accumulated during the past few years, there are a few which typically read as follows:

"Dear Mike: Why in blazes can't you fellows in New York write the Rules so that ordinary fellows can understand them? You people simply have no conception of the problems that we have to face here. For instance, only last week, Jenny Smith won second place in the Centreville Lawn-Fencing Outdoor Handicap Individual Gala Championship. She claims to be still a novice, while some of her opponents say that she must be considered an intermediate. Nothing in your blessed rules seems to cover this situation, and there has been a protest about her entry in the Divisional Juniors. If only you fellows would give some thought to situations like this one, you could save us a lot of trouble. Please make your rules more specific, so as to avoid arguments. Sincerely yours, etc. . . ."

The Rules on Classification have given rise to innumerable problems. At times the Board of Governors has even appointed special committees to consider and reconsider these Rules. Only a year ago, such a committee, under the chairmanship of Norman Armitage, rendered a report which formed the basis of our present rules on the subject. More thought has been spent on these problems, more changes have been made in the last ten years, and more irritating questions have arisen out of these than perhaps out of any other Rules. In other words, the Rules on Classification are probably the peskiest, most ornery regulations that it has ever been our bad luck to encounter.

Your Rules Committee, I think, examined the problem as thoroughly as it is humanly possible to do; it went into the rationale of classifications, the history of our present categories, the major types of complaint, the various possible factual situations which gave rise to complaints, alternative methods of classification used in other sports, and in fencing in other countries. Out of this study came the realization that in the past too much emphasis has been placed on building up more categories, and on attempting to define exactly all possible methods by which a fencer may move from one class to another, without sufficient consideration of the basic inequalities of competitive strength in different sections of the country, or of the myriad of possible titles and classifications of competition in a League comprising as many local divisions as the A.F.L.A.

We do not claim to have solved the problem once and for all. As a matter of fact, our present rules have some weaknesses which should be corrected in the next few years. But I believe that we have laid the foundation for a workable solution of this problem on a national basis. It is the purpose of this article to present to you the basis of my belief,

WHAT THE RULES INTEND TO ACCOMPLISH.

The Rules Book for the first time (Rule 8) states clearly the purpose of the Rules on Classification: to provide reasonable equality of strength in certain competitions. Axiomatic? Of course, but once you define the basic principle, you are on your way to a systematic solution of the problem. Examine, then, the specific rules and see how they work out in practice. You will find that they work out fairly well within any one division. However, a real difficulty arises when Mr. A, who is the best fencer in the X Division, goes to compete in the Y Division and finds that, theoretically, he may rank with the top men in Y, but practically his skill would rate him among the second or third fight in Division Y. How can you then provide him "reasonable equality of strength in competition" in inter-division (sectional or national) events?

HISTORY OF OUR CLASSIFICATIONS. Our present classifications, five in number, are the result of a long and tortuous process of building up new categories to meet such specific situations. When the A.F.L.A. was founded, all competitions were "open"—that is, all fencers were eligible to compete in them. There were no classifications of fencers or of competitions. If weaker, less experienced contestants did not have a chance, it was just too bad. However, as the League grew in size and strength, the "junior" class was added, and some competitions, limited to juniors, were scheduled. At this time, "junior" (a term borrowed from our A.A.U. affiliation) meant anyone who had never won a medal. By 1925, we had expanded our classifications to four: "Junior" had grown in stature. It meant, briefly, anyone who had not placed in the national open championship; or who had not won first place in the divisional open or junior championships, or in the national junior championship; or who had not been an international fencer. "Novice" now became the term for those who had not won medals; at one time there was also a two-year limit on the novitiate. "Prep" was a term applied to a fencer entering his first competition; after that he automatically became a novice.

A few years ago, the "intermediate" classification was born out of the inequalities of strength in various sections of the country. Winners of "junior" events in many divisions, or even of "senior" events, who thereby became "seniors," found themselves seriously handicapped by loss of competitive opportunities in sectional and national events. Both the fencers and their divisional officers were ready to concede that, on the basis of their current skill, they were not yet ready for "senior" ranking on a sectional or national basis. What to do? Build up a new class! By calling such fencers "intermediates," they remained eligible for the "national junior championship," while at the same time they were barred from the divisional junior events. But this solution simply added another rung to the ladder—calling for even more meticulous distinctions as between one step and

the next. Practically, it resulted in new "intermediate" events in sectional and divisional schedules, but the basic problem of inter-divisional ratings was not materially nearer solution.

TRANSITION FROM ONE CLASS TO ANOTHER.

The principles which govern transition from one classification to another have remained surprisingly constant. Only in the lowest class is there an automatic time limit. The former time limit on the "novice" class was eliminated when that class no longer was the lowest in rank. The dominating principle of transition is **competitive achievement**. The rules list specific events which a fencer must win, or place in, in order to move to a higher group. This principle is, I believe, sound. Its chief virtue is objectivity: Competitive prizes won by various fencers are a matter of official record, not of personal opinion. Of course, classification might be made by a committee, as is done in some other sports, and in fencing in some countries. But a critical examination of our situation leads to the conclusion that the objective standard is best for us.

One of the reasons lies in our **rule of non-retrogression**. That is, once a fencer has achieved a higher rank, he never can be classified in a lower category (Rule 9). Your Rules Committee examined this question very carefully, and decided in favor of the rule. This decision was based upon the nature of fencing itself: It is a lifetime sport, and competitive experience is a powerful factor in the sum-total of competitive ability. While a fencer, as he grows older, may lose speed, timing, and coordination, he constantly accumulates greater and greater experience or "head" to counterbalance the loss of his physical powers. Therefore, it is impossible to apply objective tests to any scheme which permits retrogression, such as one which would allow an internationalist to fall back into the "junior" class. I am not speaking now of the list of Ranking Fencers, which is independent of our five basic classifications, and which I shall consider in a later article.

Furthermore, we must go back to our original purpose in having Rules on Classification: Obviously the rationale of the whole system lies in the protection of younger and less experienced fencers, who have not yet achieved the peak of their ability, rather than in providing new opportunities for fencers who have already had their chance to bask in the limelight of victory. Certainly, whatever opportunities for competition may be provided for those who have slipped in their competitive powers, these should not be provided at the expense of those who are still on the way up. Some other solution, such as that envisaged when the "Veteran" class was established five years ago, is probably better. I shall deal with this question in a later article. At any rate, your Rules Committee preferred our objective standard and our rule of non-retrogression to the rating system in polo, or the handicap system in golf.

Two recent changes in the Rules of Classification indicate that these views are not wholly new. At one time, a college fencer who made the varsity in any official college competition was automatically classified as a "junior," even if he went into a dual meet as a fifth substitute after the match had been already won. A few years ago, the rule was amended to classify as "juniors" only those fencers who competed on the varsity at the intercollegiate championships. Even this rule has been abandoned now for

over a year. The number of colleges participating in various official intercollegiate championships has greatly increased, and the number of college fencers, of varying degrees of ability, has grown to astronomic proportions. Taking all these factors into consideration, the Classifications Committee decided to apply the objective test of competitive accomplishments—the actual winning of a prize in an intercollegiate championship—to determine "junior" ranking for college fencers.

Another recent change modifies our former strict rule that the classification of a fencer in one weapon does not affect his classification in another weapon. Under our new rules, a senior in one weapon automatically becomes a novice in all the others. The reason behind this is the fact that competitive experience in one weapon is easily transferable to another, so that a senior should not be considered as a prep in any weapon any longer. This rule was recommended by the Committee on Classifications and adopted well over a year ago. Your Rules Committee decided to let this scheme stand, although several members of the Rules Committee were inclined to believe that it did not go far enough, and that the better rule would be to make an intermediate in one weapon automatically a novice in the other weapons while a senior in one weapon should automatically become a junior in the other weapons. There is much merit in this idea, and it is being filed for formal consideration at a later date. Its rationale is much the same as that behind the principle of nonretrogression: the importance of experience in determining competitive skill.

THE MODERN TREND. Despite the improvements effected in the provisions of the Rules on Classification, the problem raised by the inequalities of competitive strength in various parts of the country still remained to be solved. And in this connection, your Rules Committee came to the conclusion that the real solution lay, not in the Classification Rules themselves but in the **making of schedules**. The more fruitful approach to our problem, we believed, was to try to **standardize the scheme of competitions which affected the official classification of fencers throughout the country**.

We were of the opinion that in the prep, novice, and junior ranks, each division should have all the leeway in the world to protect their younger and less experienced fencers. Thus, you will see that the specific rules are supplemented by a principle of construction (Rule 9-h) which resolves doubt in favor of the higher class in the first three categories. On the other hand, the inter-divisional classification problem arises mostly in the junior, intermediate and senior ranks, since it is mostly competition in these ranks that will attend sectional and national events. Therefore, standardization and tightening of the requirements for these higher classifications was indicated.

The first step was taken by the national Board of Governors over a year ago, in prescribing a limited use of the word "championship" in the title of regularly scheduled competitions. By a self-imposed rule, the term "national championship" was highly restricted, to be used only in the most important events in the League. The "national championship tournament," held during a gala week, was scheduled so as to make it possible for fencers throughout the country to participate in the nationals. This resulted in the elimination of "national championship" rating in the

lower categories, such as the national junior championship; and, at least for the time being, in the elimination of such events as the national outdoor epee and sabre championships, which had a long history but which in effect were restricted, by the exigencies of scheduling, to competitors in the eastern divisions, except in occasional Olympic years. At the same time, the Board of Governors limited the use of the term "championship" in sectional events, so that such a title may not be used in events below the class of intermediate. Any junior or novice events held at the sectional tournament must be classed as plain "competitions" and not as championships. Furthermore no competition below the rank of "junior," even in a division, may officially rate as a "championship" (Rule 14).

Now, this may seem to be a high-handed interference with the rights of local divisions and sections: but think it over carefully. Unless some such limitation is worked out, we could have such spurious titleholders as the "All-Eastern Prep Champion" or "The National Novice Champion"—titles which would serve no useful purpose except to tickle the vanity of a mediocre fencer who has still to prove his real worth.

On the other hand, consider the advantages of these regulations in connection with the Rules on Classification: a fencer can now become a senior ONLY by specific achievements in **national or sectional championships**. Divisional events do not count, so that the weakness or strength of his particular division is minimized. If the fencer wins or places in national or sectional championships, he has a solid record of achievement which gives dignity and meaning to his rank as a senior. Likewise a fencer can become an

intermediate only by specific achievements in official sectional or divisional **championships**. Any comparable achievement in a non-championship competition does not count.

The fundamental distinction between "championships" and plain "competitions" is further emphasized by our new Rule 15, so that strict adherence to the rules of competition is required in all events which affect the higher classifications. A handicap event may conceivably be the basis for transition from "novice" to "junior," but it can never be the basis of "intermediate" or "senior" rating.

Finally, under our new Rules, the control of the national rating of fencers is now under the jurisdiction of the local governing body. This control, as suggested in an advisory paragraph (Rule 18), may be exercised by intelligent draftsmanship in the local schedule of events. The title of a specific event should be decided only after considering the effect it may have upon the national rating of the winners. There is no essential need for any division to hold an "open championship," unless the strength of competition warrants classifying the three medalists as intermediates; a divisional intermediate or junior championship might be preferable. Or, for that matter, it might be best not to schedule any "championship" events, if the divisional fencers are not as a group ready for the consequent transition to the higher classifications; the holding of open or limited "competitions" could provide competitive opportunities without raising the classification of the winners beyond the junior rank.

(Continued on page 16.)

New Rules Book • Score Sheets • Spectator Pamphlets

The Amateur Fencers League of America Presents:

1941 FENCING RULES

Official Rules Book of the Amateur Fencers League of America, the Intercollegiate Fencing Association, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

New, up-to-date, thoroughly revised, complete.

PRICE: FIFTY CENTS

(Bound in Paper)

Active Members of the A. F. L. A. are entitled to One Free Copy.

Limited Library Edition, Bound in Buckram, \$1.25

Address the National Secretary of the A. F. L. A.

To facilitate the conduct of

COMPETITIONS

the Fencers League has prepared printed **Score-Sheets**, to be used by Bout Directors, for conducting **Individual and Team matches**.

These score sheets, bound in pads, are sold at cost price, 60 cents per pad.

The League also prepared an attractive folder, explaining the game for spectators who wish to watch competitions.

These **Spectator Pamphlets** can be had also at 60c per 100 copies.

Dr. Ervin S. Acel, 25 Beaver St., N. Y. City

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

(Response to "An American School of Foil")

By WILLIAM F. STROBEL

It was very interesting to read the Editor's article entitled "An American School of Foil" as presented in the July issue. There is no doubt that the fencing in this country has taken to the road of simplicity and rightfully has taken from both the orthodox schools what it felt most advantageous. The writer went into detail illustrating his point by citing examples, however, I feel, not too convincingly as proof of the establishment of a new school, but rather merely pointing out that there exists in a group, a variety of temperament. Whether or not we can rightfully label differences of character and their applications to a skill as a new school is questionable.

The Editor did not point out some of the causes underlying the simplification of sword play and therefore of course its continuation. Perhaps with a certain boldness, we can call it the American school. Fencing masters would probably label it "a degenerated school" and this point of view would not be unjustified. As I see it, the simplification of sword play in this country has two main sources. First of all, the fact that most of our fencers are coached by the high pressure method for quick results, and that the results are measured exclusively in terms of victories in competition. The interscholastic group falls into this category. The collegiate group certainly does. And what clubs have we who do not invite to their membership the competitively successful secondary school or collegiate fencer?

How much fencing is actually done in the "fencing for fencing's sake spirit," for the sheer pleasure of engaging in an evening of exercise, fun and social contact, devoid of any competitive tint? Our high school youngsters want to go out and win a bout after several weeks of lessons and play. I say play, rather than practice, because practice for the perfection of movement seems too tedious and uninteresting. They take a lesson and then engage a few of the other fellows around, always with the competitive approach in mind. This system, of course, must lead to a simplification of the art and a throwing out of the so-called unessential movements.

In my opinion this does not contribute to a new school, but rather reverts back to the age in this sport when fencing masters went about selling tricks to duellists. It distinctly is a reversion to the function of fencing for combat rather than to using combat activities in modified form as leisure time hobbies. We can hardly fail to distinguish between the two, nor recognize that the approach to an activity distinctly varies with the purpose for which it is to be used. If fencing is to be a sport, then the school of complexity rather than the school of simplicity is to be aimed at. The idea seems to exist that competitions in almost unlimited number create interest in fencing. To evaluate the effect is not simple since numbers alone do not represent the quality of this interest. Several thousand fence and have fenced in secondary schools and colleges and yet comparatively few have been bitten seriously enough by the sport to continue it after those good old varsity days are over. As stated above, only the most competitively promising are left to continue in the same line of sports philosophy (competition) representing some Salle d'Armes.

Taking the sport in easier strides with the competitive pressure removed, one would indulge in the more complex weapon play for pleasure's sake. If, of course, touches are paramount, a competitor would be foolish to do more than was needed to ward off an attack or drive through a touch. Hence simplicity. Then too, the high tension of everlasting competition works on the participants to such an extent that the word sportsmanship is just something heard of rather than practiced. No amount of directors and judges with all the knowledge and ability in the world could satisfy these keyed-up prize seekers. Were there a leisurely approach to this whole art of fencing, fellows could just get together, take a lesson, practice with one another for skill perfection, and finally have a series of bouts with clubmates or visitors, without considering victory or defeat, or even keeping score. To have it so that judges were never heard of, arguments about validity in bad taste, not calling a good touch made rude, and neglecting to refuse acceptance of a doubtful touch ungentlemanly, would be an attitude leading not only to real fencing pleasure, but also to real values derived from wholesome participation.

To invite a group from another Salle d'Armes to pay you a visit not to hand it a defeat or even keep score, but rather to make new acquaintances and possibly new friendships, would be far better from all angles than just calling it a practice match in preparation for a competition. In a world and at an age of so much competitive enterprise, must we stretch this spirit to every phase of our life or would it not be more relaxing and beneficial to just play in care-free manner rather than be bent upon competitive success? I would suggest that competition be reduced drastically, and that for Juniors on down the "form" credit system be applied, and that the composition of a team be raised from three to six, all in the interest of a further growth of fencing. The above two suggestions are tried and tested ideas and I can definitely say that they have done much for the dissemination and improvement of the sport in the New York City high schools. Over-emphasis on victory is one reason why colleges are not ready to swing to this idea, or is it lack of progressive attitude?

My going off on a tangent simply re-enforces my point that simplification of the art is more a deterioration resulting from an over-emphasis of competition rather than the development of something new. Develop a leisurely, carefree, hobby philosophy and the intricacies of the sport will find their place and as a result fencers will converse with the blades, rather than swear with them. One will fence with less caution, with less of the do or die, and temperament, drive, calmness, relentlessness, judgment, and what have you will still be part of the art and yet hardly give cause to be labeled a new school. It is, however, not the new school I feel strongly against, but rather the causes which bring it about, through emphasis on competition rather than enjoyment. Another evil closely related to this is the concentration of effort and facilities for the few competitively-minded ones instead of the widespread use of all involved for the hobbyists. In other words the old controversy of varsity vs. intramural. I strongly recommend a consideration of this matter.

AN ESSAY ON SPORTSMANSHIP

My dictionary does not contain an adequate definition of sportsmanship, a definition of what the average person infers when he refers to any act as one of "good sportsmanship" or of "poor sportsmanship." Webster defines sportsmanship as "the practice of field sports," whatever that means. No, to the average individual, sportsmanship refers to type of conduct while participating in sport. In our discussion of sportsmanship we shall confine ourselves to a discussion of type of conduct while participating in fencing.

Sportsmanship is a ticklish subject with many ramifications. It can be carried to a nicety in one extreme and appear mawkishly ostentatious or it can be so completely lacking that you would not be surprised to see such a representative sneak pennies from a blindman's cup. Obviously, good sportsmanship lies somewhere between these extremes.

One's conduct is a revelation of one's character or upbringing. Any competitor by his actions is exposing his character to everyone who sees him in action. When you are fencing for fun in the Salle you may be revealing your character only to one opponent. When you are in competition you are giving yourself away to many opponents, officials and spectators at the same time. Theoretically, therefore, your conduct in competition should be exemplary. All competitors should be Alphonse and Gastons, bowing and scraping and doing more apologizing than fencing. That would be horrible.

To me the good sport on the fencing strip is the man who fences as well as he can, who keeps his mouth shut at all times, calling no touches for his opponent and claiming no touches for himself. The beauty of this definition is that it could be followed very easily by every fencer and would be, as a ruling, most easily enforceable by the Director. The strict compliance to this simple conduct would do much to clarify many of the competitive problems encountered today in many of our fencing competitions.

On the other hand the good sport on the fencing strip in the Salle d'Armes is again the man who fences as well as he can but who calls every touch that his opponent makes against him and gives more than liberal acknowledgment to his opponent's right of way. He makes no claims for his own touches, leaving that entirely to the sportsmanship of his opponent. Salle fencing, therefore, finds more slaps and passes called as touches than would be allowed in competition since no good sportsman stops to weigh the type of point made against him. If he feels something arrive upon his jacket he calls "touch" and it is up to his opponent to qualify that, if such is necessary.

Here you have two entirely different viewpoints on the same subject of sportsmanship. Both are right and both fit into the purpose for which they are intended.

This entire article came about as a result of Mr. Strobel's article on the opposite page. In it he states, "the high tension of everlasting competition works on the participants to such an extent that the word sportsmanship is just something heard of rather than practiced. No amount of directors and judges with all the knowledge and ability in the world could

satisfy these keyed-up prize seekers." He leaves the impression that competitive amateurs are terrible sports and that the offense is theirs alone. I cannot agree with this and yet I do agree that his statements will be accepted by many as essentially correct. I believe that the sportsmanship of competitive amateurs deserves some explanation.

In the first place, competition calls upon the fencer to operate at his greatest efficiency. Everything that he has learned is called upon and his attention must be concentrated upon the sole purpose of point-making. He must simplify his fencing for the purpose at hand. All flourishes must be discarded. He directs himself at his opponent's defense and becomes more numerically-minded than classically-minded. He and his opponent usually have a good time (that is the fascination of competitive fencing; the all-out matching of wits and skill). These competitors usually know what they are doing, what happens and which of them was correct. They have, however, a group of officials superimposed upon them to interpret their actions and award their endeavors. In this, lies the major source of our trouble.

Naturally, an official to be good has to know at least as much about fencing as the competitors over whom he officiates. As you progress upward in the fencing classifications from prep, novice, junior, intermediate to senior competitions it naturally becomes harder to find officials who are the equals of the competitors in fencing experience. Pity the Seniors,

THE SALLE D'ARMES HENRY IV

229 East 61st Street, New York City

Founded 5 Years Ago

(January 22, 1936)

Exchanges Birthday Greetings

With

THE RIPOSTE

On Its 5th Birthday

therefore, who have the fewest number of officials adequately experienced to interpret their actions and their tempo. Furthermore, when the Seniors are in competition the good directors among their own numbers are frequently fencing also and they are thus deprived of the services of many of those few men who can adequately officiate for them. They end up by being judged and directed by a second line of officials who blunder along as best they can only to find themselves in the midst of fireworks.

It is my contention that evidences of poor sportsmanship in competition well mostly from faults in the officiating. This is proved time and time again by few evidences of objectionable behavior on the part of the fencers in the lower classification competitions. These competitions are generally served by officials who are top-notch and whose decisions therefore do not annoy the competitors.

Would you consider an artist a poor sportsman if he lost his temper at someone spilling a bottle of ink on his new drawing? Would you consider a pianist as over-temperamental if he stopped playing because some stupid listener blew his nose during a particularly delicate point in his playing? I don't think that you would and yet you insist that a fencer is a poor sportsman to be disturbed by the fact that a director interprets an opponent's immediate remise as the initial attack and awards it above the direct riposte. This not only steals one of his rightful points from him but gives his opponent a touch he didn't deserve, a difference of two points. Don't forget that these fencers spend hours and hours, year upon year in their training. They have worked just as hard as your artist or pianist to perfect their abilities. To them, a touch beautifully executed is an accomplishment as deserving of proper recognition as the ink drawing or the piano solo. They deserve this much credit, that they seldom blow up at the first evidence of faulty officiating. Nevertheless, they are human and as the evening wears on, the competition becomes harder, and the muscles grow weary, the nerves become more jumpy and fireworks do occur.

As I've already mentioned, you see more evidences of poor sportsmanship in the higher classifications than any other place. I hope that I have given adequate explanation of this. Otherwise, Mr. Strobel would certainly appear to be right when he says, "Then too, the high tension of everlasting competition works on the participants to such an extent that the word sportsmanship is just something heard of rather than practiced." Without the underlying facts, any logician could prove that since the Seniors give the poorest exhibition of sportsmanship and since they too have generally been in competition longer than anyone else then it is plain that multiple competition makes you a poor sport. Equally as provable would be the statement that the poorer port you were the sooner you would become a Senior. No, the answer lies in a fact that the spectator is seldom in a position to appreciate and the non-competitor fails to realize, namely that unsportsmanlike conduct on a competitive strip originates from an official's inadequacy rather than from a competitor's will to win at all odds.

There is no personal animosity between opponents in a fencing match. You don't hate your opponent. The keenest fought bouts are usually those between very close friends. There is no pleasanter place than a locker room before and after a competition. The fencers assemble, renew close acquaintanceships, dis-

cuss the sport, joke among themselves at occurrences during the competition, and later drift off in groups all mixed up as to clubs or affiliations to have a cup of coffee together. I have never heard any of them say, "John Jones was certainly a poor sport today." They might say, "John, you certainly blew all to pieces on that stop-thrust decision, what was the matter?" This would be a natural investigation of causes but no implication that he had been a poor sport toward his opponent by doing so.

We have admitted that certain things happen during competition that do not look well to the outsider. They are unfortunate and regrettable. They can be eliminated by strict enforcement of the silence rule on the part of competitors. This, unfortunately, would not stop the actual cause of the trouble which lies in poor officiating. The ability of judges and officials has improved remarkably in recent years. It will undoubtedly continue to improve. Either enforce the silence rule or forbid spectators from witnessing competitions. As a competitor I am in favor of the latter. (No friend of mine has ever been invited to a competition in which I participated.) On the other hand, as one desirous of making as many Americans fencing-conscious as possible, I am in favor of the former. Therefore, let us enforce the silence rule and make the most of it.

We have perhaps been unfair in discussing one angle of sportsmanship at such great length. An apology for the behaviour of competitors is probably of little interest to the non-competitor. Nevertheless, this essay to this point has been felt due to the competitors who time and again are looked upon as poor sports.

As for good sportsmanship and the fencer little further need be said. He is the best sportsman in the world. All kinds and types enter the sport and the sport itself has a refining quality of its own wherein it either weeds out the poor sport in some magical way or better still makes good sports of the few poor sports who continue to fence. In all sincerity I say that the Seniors are actually the best fencing sportsmen. The sport itself deserves credit for this for the longer one associates himself with fencing the better sportsman he becomes. Competitions should not be blamed for poor sportsmanship for the men who enter competitions are better sports than those who do not.

I should tread lightly on this last point. I shall offend a great number of alligator-skinned non-competitive fencers in salles all over this country who positively refuse to call a touch against themselves unless that touch is so obvious that it cannot be avoided. They are the really poor sportsmen that we have to deal with. Fortunately they count for nothing and need be used here only in final refutation of the charge that has been made against men courageous enough to enter competition. This is not meant to imply that non-competitive fencers are poor sportsmen as a rule but I firmly believe that if a man has any tendencies toward being a poor sport he will get these tendencies knocked out of him in competition. They will never be knocked out of him in salle fencing for here his opponents will go on giving him all of the breaks which in fact leads him to bolder and bolder claims for himself. It is most aggravating to visit a strange salle d'armes and undergo the invitations to fence with all and sundry. The competitive fencers one meets will always play square with you but so many of the others will ask to fence for touches and then proceed to refuse to

announce the hits they receive. Perhaps they rush home and write their dear diaries that they beat so-and-so today. Whatever it is you can never beat them on their own terms without violating your own code. It really matters nothing, but experiences of this kind leave a bad taste in your mouth that you will seldom experience in competition.

Now let us take some of the men who impress spectators as poor sportsmen during competition. Watch them in the salle d'armes. They invariably call every conceivable slap or pass as good touches against themselves. How is this? My explanation remains that these men are thoroughly good sports and that their temperamental actions on the competitive strip are aimed in sheer exasperation at the wrong decisions of the officials. All competitors suffer from this and some are less able to control their reactions than others. I defend them only from the charge of being poor sports.

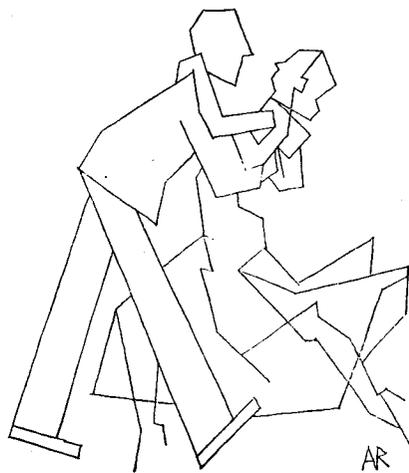
I cannot agree with Mr. Strobel's plea for a more leisurely approach to the whole art of fencing. Fencing as an art would soon die if such a condition should come about. Salle fencing and fencing play are good and have elements of fun, but this would become deadly monotonous if you did not occasionally count touches and vie to outdo your opponent. The idea of not wanting to beat your opponent is as strange to fencing fundamentals as never wanting to spurt your automobile above a 35 mile per hour speed would be to an automobilist. It just isn't natural for the human being not to want to test himself against opposition. On the other hand all competition and no play is equally bad. A fencer, I believe, needs some of both. A complete concentration

upon one or the other loses half of the fun of the sport for the participant. I can therefore agree with Mr. Strobel when he says that all competition is bad. I do not believe that a complete reversal to non-competition would do the sport any good. Both have their place, both have their own brand of sportsmanship and combined they make up fencing as a complete sport, offering fun, exercise, character training and variety.

It is perhaps poor sportsmanship to write this reply to some of Mr. Strobel's statements and place them so that the average reader will read them after reading Mr. Strobel's article. There is a certain advantage in being the last speaker and this article has that vantage point. We hope that our readers will now read Mr. Strobel's article a second time and give him fair credit for his point of view.

Mr. Strobel is an ardent devotee of fencing. He is a professional and teaches the sport at the Morris High School in New York City. He has supervised the conduct of the P.S.A.L. fencing championships in New York City for many years. From his group have come such fencers as Norman Lewis, Maxwell Garret, Silvio Giolito and Arthur Tauber to name a few. Other coaches and schools are now receiving credit for the accomplishments of many of the boys who were started in fencing by him and other coaches in the Public School Athletic League. These coaches have to fight constantly against the competitive desires of their boys who, after a few lessons, want only to go into competition. They endeavor to counteract this youthful enthusiasm for point-counting by stressing "form credit" and have trained excellent little fencers as a result of this.

—D. E.



Date Her Now!

FOR MARCH 15th

The Annual Rapier Club Ball

EXHIBITIONS and DANCING

JOHN JAY HALL
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Advance Price - \$2.00
Door Admission - \$2.25

Tickets Available At All Salles

THE PROFESSIONAL PROBLEM

PART ONE

One would have little respect for the medical or legal professions if anyone owning a thermometer or a lawbook could put out a shingle and claim that he was just about the best doctor or lawyer that the world had ever seen. Yet that is exactly the situation in fencing where anyone owning a mask, a few weapons and preferably a mustache can set himself up as a fencing **master** and offer to teach the intricacies of a time-honored sport to anyone who applies.

Unfortunately, there are no required standards to enter the fencing profession and just as unfortunate is the fact that there are no checks upon the results of professionals after they start to teach the sport. As a result, the sport has a goodly number of poseurs and quacks but more serious still it has a large number of well-intended professionals who are incompletely equipped to teach the sport. They should be taking lessons rather than giving them. Then too, as with every other group there are the lazy drifters who talk more than they perform and have entered the sport as an easy racket, after failing similarly at other endeavors undertaken with the same attitude.

We do not fear the quacks. They generally expose themselves in short time and have to pull up and move on to new fields that will listen to their tales of greatness. Nor do we fear the sluggards for they generally exterminate themselves through their own inertia. The ones we fear are in the large intermediate group who devote a great deal of time and energy to teaching the sport incorrectly. This they do blindly in many cases which is as much to be regretted as if they knew their faults.

We have already stated in a previous article that there are 280 professional fencers in the United States and have listed 230 of their names in a special Directory. We have appealed to them to take over the very important responsibility of developing the sport at this particular period when it gives every appearance of being ready to blossom forth into a really sizeable sport. Now we must turn about and attack them for ineptitude for, whether or not they are at fault, they nevertheless are, on the whole, as poorly qualified for their profession as any group of professionals we know. They stand up all right as men, they like the sport, many of them are very hard workers, but they just do not know a great deal about the sport they profess to teach. This is not 100% true. There are probably two dozen real **Fencing Masters** in the United States, men who know fencing well and are fully qualified to train a youngster into Senior quality. Even these few 24 do not all understand all three weapons equally well but this is not our requirement of a **Master** which merely demands sufficient ability to be able to train a group of beginners in one or all weapons to a degree of excellence where they can hold their own in the best Senior or at least Junior competition.

That leaves us over 200 fencing teachers who are little better than provosts, drill masters, exercisers, poseurs, dabblers or quacks. Many of them admit their deficiency and would take advantage of instruction in their profession if it were readily available. Others refuse to plead guilty and continue to talk

better than they teach. These drift with the tide, fearing exposure from the first good amateur or professional who sees or hears them performing their mumbo-jumbo. Over all the profession lies a pall of jealousy which has in turn produced a fine group of alibi-artists. Add to this those who are eaten up with un-called-for self-importance who take it upon themselves to deride the accomplishments of their more successful competitors rather than swallow their pride and seek the help of these sources of their envy. To summarize, we are only left with the conclusion that fencing as a profession is being inadequately served by a low technical standard of fencing knowledge.

What can be done to improve the quality of professional fencing in our country? One sure help, if it could only be accomplished, would lie in the formation of a strong Professional Association. Such an Association should have a strong and critical central organization made up of the few real masters we have who would immediately establish a stiff set of standards and regulations. The Association should classify all professionals; Fencing Master (first class), Fencing Master (second class), Fencing Instructor, Fencing Teacher, Fencing Trainer with all those not able to pass the lowest class bunched together as Dry Nurses. Any bold step of this kind would probably gain the immediate approval and endorsement of such amateur organizations as the A. F. L. A., the A. A. U., the N. C. A. A. and the I. C. F. A. The Association would proceed to place rigid ratings upon the men within the profession. It would take steps to provide a center of instruction for those who honestly desired higher ratings and further training. It would not hesitate to expose poseurs and quacks. However, let us not go further into this for our thoughts are approaching fantasy in tremendous strides. The time, thought, energy and cost required for such an undertaking places such a conception beyond the hopes of even the most conscientious group of professionals. Furthermore, a Professional Association would never function according to any plan. It would be like an army made up of all Generals and no Privates and work would soon cease as it did with the Tower of Babel.

If there is no help forthcoming from collective effort, perhaps something can be done from individual effort. The individual professional has some of the remedy within his own grasp if he would only view himself in the cold light of self-analysis. Let us start out with what is probably his worst fault. He has in many cases become bored with his own profession. This is his own fault for he seldom does anything to freshen his viewpoint. He lives completely within his small circle of influence and that circle has cramped him. He has forgotten that fencing is a living sport. It is developing new ideas and methods under his very eyes and he refuses to see it. He lives in a house by the side of the road and won't even look out of the window.

Let us give a simple analogy as an example of what happens to many professionals. We shall use dancing for this analogy. Most Americans know how to dance. Women continue to like dancing longer than men.

(Continued on page 12.)

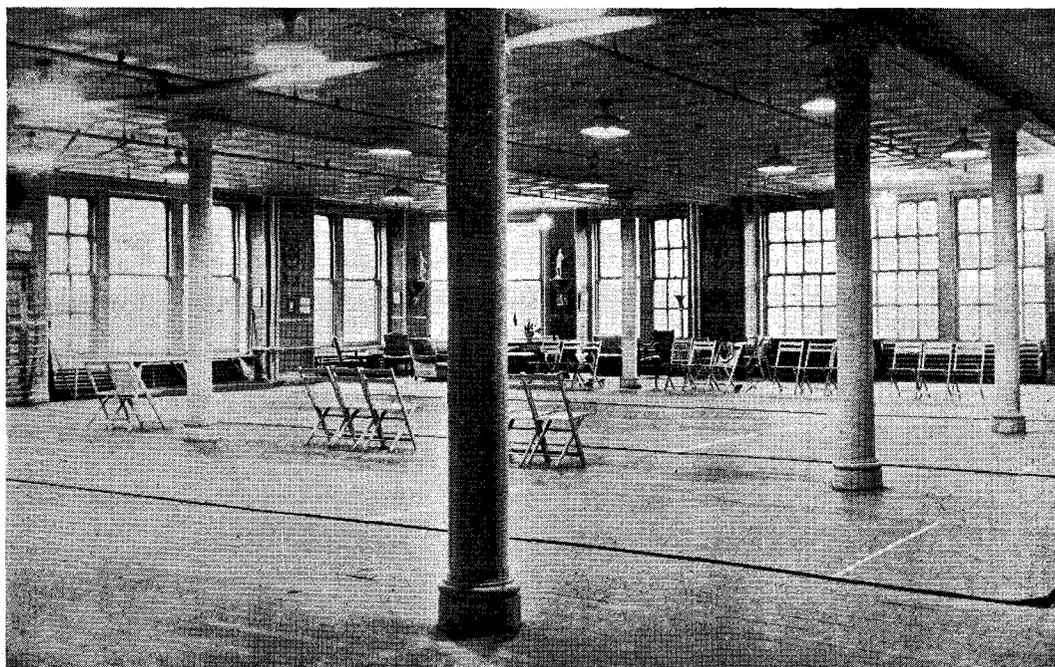
THE SALLE D'ARMES SANTELLI

HOME OF

THE SALLE SANTELLI

THE METROPOLITAN FENCING CLUB

THE UNITED STATES FENCING EQUIPMENT CO., INC.



THE WORLD'S LARGEST PRIVATE SALLE D'ARMES

Private Instruction at Moderate Prices

Season Membership - \$50.00 Per Person

Special Equipment Catalog Upon Request

24-34 UNIVERSITY PLACE
NEW YORK CITY

TELEPHONE
GRamercy 5-5911

THE PROFESSIONAL PROBLEM

(Continued)

Why? The man leads his partner in the dance. He knows a few steps and after he has tried out these steps on a few partners the only variation left to him is in the particular personal charm of the chosen partner. The woman has a different experience with every partner. Each male partner tries his few steps with her but added together she has an interesting evening of variety and is always ready for more. Cannot the professional be compared to the dancing male and the amateur be compared to the woman dancer? Does not the professional get bored after repeating his few pet actions with one pupil after another. The amateur fences around either in practice or competition and the pleasure found in variety of actions is always his for the seeking.

For a man to gain more pleasure from his dancing he must go to some dancing school and learn some new steps. For a professional to keep from going stale, he must attend fencing competitions, watch what other professionals have apparently been teaching their pupils and even go to another professional and be freshened up with a course of lessons.

We held our National Fencing Championships last May. There were 72 entries in these strong individual competitions. How many of the 30 or more New York City fencing professionals so much as attended these contests? Very few, and these were not consistent in attendance. Alvar Hermanson of Chicago and Charles Schmitter of Detroit attended almost every contest. They came to New York with their fencers, watched every bout that they could, discussed fencing with all and sundry and returned home to change this, improve that and continue with the other principle they had been teaching. These men are open-minded and progressive. They took advantage of an opportunity that was offered to all of the New York City professionals to little avail.

Why should Aldo Nadi, who probably knows more about foil than any other man we've had the pleasure to meet, attend even prep and novice foil competitions? He takes a seat well up front and watches as interestedly as if it were a world's championship. Why? Because he knows that there are things to be learned even in watching the mistakes of the rankest beginner. To him it is a living sport and he never ceases to study the personalities and the results of trial and error among active competitors, no matter how slow or inefficient they may be.

One thing is sure. Fencing will never be forwarded by professionals who never leave their own Salles. These men are really out of touch with the sport they profess to teach, living in a fencing world of their own that has long since gathered moss or run to weeds. They need to be asked by their own pupils, "Where were you during last night's competition?" If this doesn't succeed, then the repeated failure of their pupils in competition should be pointed out to them and a gentle hint given that unless they undertake to freshen their viewpoints with more contact with the active fencers then their pupils will look elsewhere for that fresher viewpoint.

(To be continued in our next issue.)

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

The University of California's five-man team won the Heron Trophy in men's foil over a field of seven teams fencing in the Northern California division. In the competitions, which began on October 4 and ended on November 29, the University team was tied with the Olympic Club in matches won and lost, each compiling a score of 5-1, but California's record of 107 bouts won and 43 lost against the Clubmen's 98-52 gave them the trophy.

The G G 5 captured third place with four matches won and two lost. The Funke Fencing Academy, Stanford University, the Oakland Fencing Club and an unattached team finished in that order behind the prize winners.

Salvatore Giambra, fencing under the colors of the G G 5, won the division's 1940-41 men's intermediate foil championship on December 4 at the University of California gymnasium. Giambra defeated Harry Mortimer, of the Olympic Club, 5-3 in a fence-off after the two had been tied with records of four victories and one loss apiece at the end of the regular competition. Third place went to William Mertsching of Hamilton Field, U.S.A., who lost only to the two medalists. Fourteen foilsmen entered the competition.

The Open Individual Sabre Championship of Northern California was held at the Olympic Club on January 24th. There were 14 competitors. Salvatore Giambra of G.G.5 and Alfred R. Snyder of the Olympic Club were tied for first place at the completion of the five-man finals with 4 wins and 1 loss apiece. Giambra won the fence-off 5-3. Lawrence Bocci of G.G.5 took third place on the basis of touches after tying with Jack Hovick of the University of California with 3 wins and 2 losses each.

The Junior Individual Sabre Championship of the Division was held at Burkes Gymnasium on January 31st. The competition opened with 11 contestants. Robert Shrader of the Oakland Fencing Club won first place over Jack Hovick, University of California, on a 5-1 fence-off after they tied in the finals with 4 wins and 1 loss apiece. Dallas Mays of the Oakland Fencing Club was third with 3 wins and 2 losses.

The Division's Women's Junior Foil Team Championship was also held on January 31st at Burkes Gymnasium. There were only two teams entered. The Funke Fencing Academy team of Emilie Romaine, Helen Sander and Margie Nevis defeated the G.G.5 team of Lydia Riedener, Yolanda Becutti and Norma Perotti by a score of 7 to 2.

The final match of the Division's Open Sabre Team Championship was held at the Olympic Club on February 3rd. Six teams entered this competition originally. The Olympic Club team of Alfred R. Snyder, Bryan H. Smith and Harry Mortimer and the G.G.5 team of Salvatore Giambra, Victor Vari, Lawrence Bocci, and John Cinelli each survived its respective elimination round in an earlier evening undefeated. Although the G.G.5 team appeared slightly stronger than the Olympic Club team on a statistical basis, the Olympic Club team won the right to represent the Division in the Pacific Coast Championships by winning the final match 5-3.

The Oakland Fencing Club, whose members' names are beginning to appear among the Division's winners, deserves some sort of introduction. Formed only last April, it has consistently maintained fencing interest

in what was originally raw territory for fencing. Not a single week has gone by without at least one meeting, often two. One must be really interested in fencing to participate in its activities, no "fly-by-nights" allowed. Members must have sound training in at least one weapon and must be a member of the A. F. L. A. before acceptance. The club offers no instruction and its members pay no dues. When money is needed for any purpose, a vote on an assessment to members is taken and one negative vote is sufficient to kill the proposal.

Fencing, both recreational and competitive, has been initiated at Hamilton Field, the Army Air Base in Marin County.

× ×

MODERN HOPLITES

By ROY S. TINNEY

My previous opinion of the bayonet has been completely revised. I now realize that it was wishful thinking that made me regard the toad-sticker as obsolete. It was part of my job thirty years ago to teach bayonet play. It wasn't play either, it was hard, punishing work. In spite of helmet, pads and every possible precaution, I was continually getting hurt. There was no fun in it; fencing with stubby, improvised ten-pound pikes is definitely not a sport.

When at school one of the lines I wrote in my penmanship book ran, "I fear the Greeks, even bearing gifts." The Italians have learned to fear the Greeks bearing bayonets. These lusty Greek mountaineers have a highly developed talent for hand-to-hand fighting. Strangely enough, they are called Evzones which literally translated means "fair waisted men," which reminds me of the kilted rowdies, the "Damen von Hoelle" (Ladies from Hell) who mused up the Germans in the first World War. Apparently there is nothing pantywaist about kilted mountaineers on the warpath.

The papers report Greek bayonet charges have become so terribly effective that the Italian press speaks of the Evzones as barbarians. This is the same press which saw nothing at all barbaric about the way Italian aviators bombed black spearmen, huddled together in the African desert. Thus one gains an impressive idea of just how terrible these bayoneteers must be.

The Evzones are shepherds from remote mountain villages nestling in the foothills of Agrapha of Roumely, Ossa of Thessaly, Pindus of Epirus, Olympus of Macedonia. Their kilted uniforms conform to the style set by the ancient Greek hoplites, lads who won when war was simple, direct and personal; the issue being settled with swords and spears. This explains why the Evzones are so handy with cold steel.

They duck dive-bombers, detour around tanks and ignore machine guns until they are within thrusting distance of the Italians. Then they proceed to fight as their forefathers fought.

Like the Scots, the Evzones have earned a new name. The Italians refer to them as Thunder Devils. Thunder. That may explain everything. Can it be possible the Greeks have added sound effects to a bayonet charge? Anyhow, they have made us old timers admit we are mistaken. The bayonet is still an effective combat weapon.

PHILADELPHIA

Walter Vignini, of the Greco Fencing Academy, New York, won the novice foil competition which drew eleven competitors. Roy Burrell and Tom Dunn, both representing the Triangle Sword Club, won second and third place medals, respectively.

The novice epee, fought on the European system—without ink, each contestant honor bound to call touches against himself—drew nine entries and proved to be an interesting experiment. James Birdsall, Philadelphia Sword Club, was the winner, with William Govette and Roy Burrell, both of the Triangle Sword Club, taking second and third.

Twenty-seven men competed in the division's three weapon meet, another experiment that turned out well. The first three places in foil went to Philip E. Shakespeare, Sword Club, John Austin, P. F. L., and Leonard Fries, Philadelphia Fencers Club. William Govette, Triangle, was the epee winner, followed by James Birdsall, Penn Charter School, and James Gassaway, R. S. C. Henry Pugh of the Sword Club and Arthur MacArthur and J. Aakarman were first, second, and third, respectively, in the sabre division.

The division's novice sabre competition went to William Govette, Triangle, over a field of eight. Henry Pugh, Sword Club, was second, and Roy Burrell, Triangle, third.

× ×

NEW JERSEY

Evident lack of interest on the part of New Jersey's male fencers has caused a curtailment of A. F. L. A. competitions in that division thus far during the 1940-41 season, but despite that defection several events have been run off on schedule. Results of these have been:

A. Jiminez, fencing for the Salle Scafati, won the men's individual prep foil, the opening competition on the division's slate.

Harry Boutsikaris of Seton Hall College took the first place medal in the individual novice sabre. His teammate, A. Gillen, was second, and W. Hauber, Salle Scafati, third.

The individual novice epee, held on December 4, was won by Walter Hauber of the Salle Scafati. L. Brown of Drew University and G. Boles of the Salle Scafati took the other two medals.

Interest in women's competitions has been much greater, resulting in stronger entry lists and more interesting meets. In the prep foil competition, first place went to Valerie Boczar of the Salle Scafati. Runners-up were Antoinette Chieppa and Josephine Rotunda, both of the Newark Foillettes. There were ten entries.

Jean Boles of the Salle Scafati won the women's novice foil over a field of fourteen, sweeping all her matches. Mildred Fraiese of the New Jersey State Teachers College and Antoinette Chieppa of the Newark Foillettes were second and third respectively.

All competitions were held at the Salle Scafati.

A dual meet between the Salle Scafati and Drew University on December 18 resulted in a deadlock in all three weapons, 4-4 in foil and sabre, and 2-2 in epee. Representing the Salle Scafati were Carmen Dispenserie, Eddie Di Carlo, Wallace Hauber and Charles H. Hirst. For Drew, the fencers were S. Jiminez, W. Mallory, A. Zwirling, H. Abbott, D. Alvarado, L. Brown, T. Marks, and D. Mueller.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The competitive year started on October 11 at the Los Angeles Athletic Club with a women's prep foil contest which had 12 contestants. Ruth Reyna, Faulkner School of Fencing, took first place, followed by Polly Craus, of the same team, and Marjorie Boaz, Cavaliers.

Robert Kieffer, Cavaliers, won the men's prep foil on October 18 over a field of 12 at Faulkner's School of Fencing. Charles Manders, Hollywood Athletic Club, and M. R. Arteaga, Faulkner, were second and third.

Twenty-five entries competed in the men's novice foil competition on October 25 at the Los Angeles A. C. Josef Lampl of the home club won the first prize medal, with Jack Amendt and Herbert Sauke, both Faulkner, second and third.

Gladys Rose of the Cavaliers, Mrs. Gail Potter of the Salle d'Armes Potter and Eleanor Gleason, Hollywood A. C., captured the three medals in the women's novice foil on November 1 over a field of 17 at the Faulkner School. Second and third places were decided by counting touches after Mrs. Potter and Miss Gleason had tied in number of bouts won.

The men's junior foil competition at the Los Angeles A. C. on November 8 attracted 24 entries. Herbert Sauke, of the Faulkner School, took the first medal, with Clifford Coggins of the Cavaliers defeating Robert Irwin, Faulkner, for second on touches.

The biggest entry list of the season's first months—thirty-four—occurred in the men's intermediate foil on November 16 at the Salle d'Armes Potter. Andrew Boyd, Herman Hersum and Dr. Horace S. Craig, all of the Los Angeles A. C., won the three medals.

A three-way tie for first place featured the women's junior foil on November 22 at the L. A. A. C. After a fence-off, Gladys Rose of the Cavaliers took first, followed by Mrs. Gail Potter, Salle Potter, and Mavis Myre of the Faulkner School. There were 13 entries.

Edward Carfagno, fencing for the Los Angeles A. C., won the men's senior foil on November 29 at the Faulkner School over a field of six. Dr. Horace S. Craig, L. A. A. C., took second place on touches from Leonard Bellman of the Faulkner School who finished third and A. E. Kaye, also of Faulkner's, who finished fourth.

The Los Angeles Athletic Club team of Andrew Boyd, Josef Lampl and Fred Linkmeyer captured the men's junior foils team title on the same night over a field of four trios.

There were 17 contestants in the men's open foils competition on December 6 at the Los Angeles A. C., with Edward Carfagno of the home club again coming out on top. Herbert Sauke, Faulkner, beat out Andrew Boyd, L. A. A. C., for second place on a count of touches.

Winning its second straight team competition, the Los Angeles A. C. combination of Edward Carfagno, Herman Hersum and Josef Lampl swept aside a field of five teams on December 14 to win the men's open foil matches at the Hollywood Athletic Club.

Janicela York, Faulkner School, won the women's intermediate foil competition on December 20 at the Los Angeles A. C. Moreene Fitz of the Cavaliers and Muriel Calkins and Virginia Nelson of the L. A. A. C. were tied for second and placed in that order on a count of touches. There were 13 entries.

UTAH

The Gascognes Fencing Club has been disbanded and its members have joined the University Fencing Club, but the name and insignia of the Gascognes will be preserved to designate an honor society within the University Club.

Two prep competitions were held in December. A men's prep foil competition was held on December 6 in the University of Utah gymnasium, Salt Lake City. It attracted 12 contestants. Marshe Abbott of the University Fencing Club won first place, while his clubmate, Jerome Mooney, was second. Rulon Poole of the B. Y. U. Fencing Club was third. On December 7 a women's prep foil contest was also held in the gymnasium. Eight girls entered the contest. Mrs. Ramona Boner took first place, while Ida Cowie was second and Katherine Conely was third. All place-winners represented the University Fencing Club.

There were 19 entries in the novice foil competition held in the University Gymnasium on January 10. Don McGarry and Marshe Abbott of the University Fencing Club were first and second and Rulon Poole of the B. Y. U. Fencing Club was third.

Five entrants in the men's novice competition made a 125-mile trip over mountain roads (and we do mean mountain) in the dead of winter to enter this meet. Three other contestants made the 45-mile trip from Provo, Utah.

Nine girls entered the women's novice foil contest the following day. Again all winners represented the University Fencing Club. Elma Gull placed first, Mrs. Ramona Boner was second and Carolle Davis was third.

× ×

GOSSIP AND MORE

We had originally planned to publish two issues this year prior to March 15th. That is the date of the Sixth Annual Rapier Club Ball and Exhibition. The Columbia Rapier Club had planned successive advertising for these two issues. We have let the Club down by our slowness of publication and so feel duty bound to give it a free plug here to make up for the advertising it lost.

Frankly, this traditional affair has become the highlight of the fencers' social season. The fencing exhibitions and entertainment are always of the best and fencers never fail to bring their friends and relatives to impress them with the high calibre of the sport. The Editor has witnessed a great many fencing exhibitions and participated in a goodly number too, but the Rapier Club Exhibitions have always had that "something" that puts them across with a bang and makes him feel, "I'm proud to be a fencer."

Many a spectator has come to these Annual Exhibitions merely to take advantage of the pleasant dancing which climaxes these evenings. They have come away so interested in fencing that they are now annual attendants at these affairs.

Don't fail to look up the advertisement elsewhere in this issue. Make a mental note of the date and reserve that evening for one of fun, instruction and frolic. They even tell me that there will be a terrific "surprise attraction". Could it possibly be Armitage doing a sword dance atop a high wheel bicycle?

ST. LOUIS

St. Louis fencing, given added impetus by the big fencing center opened there in November, has started what promises to be one of its most successful years. Among the first of the prize competitions was the division's three-weapon team championship, which went to La Septieme's trio of Everett Dupen, Tracy Barnes and Roger Peterson by a one-touch margin over the Fencers Club. The runner-up team was composed of Alex Solomon, Lon Hocker, Jr., and Conway Briscoe. Two other three-man combinations—La Septieme seconds and a composite team—also competed.

Increased interest in the sport in St. Louis is indicated by the fact that 80 girls signed up for fencing at the local Y. W. C. A., and the weekly classes have attracted from 30 to 40 pupils. G. Harold Anthony and Ervilla Droll are the instructors.

Competitions in St. Louis at the turn of the year, results of which have not been received as we go to press, include a men's prep foil individual, novice foil, epee and sabre team, and women's prep foil.

Orest Meykar, long a fencing master of New Orleans, has transferred his activities to St. Louis and has been appointed director of the Fencing Center. His first public activity in St. Louis was the sponsorship of an invitation fencing tournament in the Coronado Hotel ballroom for the benefit of the Infantile Paralysis Fund on January 23. Included among the competitors were Carol King, Midwest women's champion, Captain Fred Siebert, National epee titleholder, Lon Hocker, Jr., Midwest sabre champion, Tracy W. Barnes, Ervilla Droll, William Chiprin, and other leading fencers.

× ×

ILLINOIS

Loyal Tingley, Jr. resigned as president of the Illinois division at a special meeting held on December 3. He was succeeded by Herb Strauss, Jr.; and Floyd Traynham, Jr. was appointed to two offices—the chairmanship of the bout committee and the presidency-elect.

Fencing his way through ten bouts without a defeat, Arthur Cohn of Austin High School won the Junior members foil meet at Bartlett Gymnasium, December 15. Cohn, the Junior foils champion of the division, had only fifteen touches scored against him throughout the competition. Second place went to Carl Hoeckner, third to Leon Strauss; both men were fencing for Hyde Park High School.

Charles L. Blair, a graduate student at the University of Chicago, captured first place in the Junior three-weapon meet. He defeated his three competitors: Robert Cameron of the Lake Shore Club, Harry Cohn of the Hermanson Fencing School, and Carl Hoeckner of Hyde Park High School.

Nine women entered the women's novice foil meet at Bartlett Gym the morning of December 22nd. Miss Marjorie Bohnhoff of Lyons Township Junior College won first place, while Miss Jean Tracy of Mundelein College was second. Miss Doris Knockart of Mundelein and Miss Marjorie Ott of the Waukegan Fencers Club were tied for third. The tie was not discovered until after the meet and duplicate third place medals were awarded.

A men's novice foil meet was held the same afternoon. Edward Vebell of the Hermanson Fencing School won first place with Morton Deutch of North-

western University, second, and Carl Hoeckner, of Hyde Park High School, third.

Loyal Tingley, ranking number three epee man, of the Hermanson Fencing School, won all of his bouts in the novice sabre meet to place an undisputed first. He was followed by Arthur Cohn, of Hyde Park High School, who lost only to Tingley, and by Robert Cameron of the Lake Shore Club, who lost only to the first two men. The meet was held at Bartlett Gym on the morning of January 5th.

Demarest Polacheck of the University of Chicago, defeated Robert Cameron of the Lake Shore Club, 3-1 to win the fence-off for first place in the novice epee meet at Bartlett Gym, on January 5th. Henry Hauser, of the Edgewater Fencers Club was third. There were 8 fencers in the competition.

Nine teams entered the open three-weapon team meet, held at Bartlett Gym the morning of January 12. Four teams qualified for the final round-robin; the University of Chicago graduate team, the University of Chicago "B" team, the Edgewater Fencers Club team, and the Hermanson Fencing School team. The Hermanson Fencing School team consisting of Floyd Traynham, Jr., Loyal Tingley and Herb Strauss, Jr., defeated each of the other teams 2-1 to win first place. The U. of C. graduate team placed second, losing only to the Hermanson team. The U. of C. "B" team was third.

The Individual Open three-weapon meet was held on the same afternoon. Jerry Mau, of the Edgewater Fencers Club, lost only one bout to win first place. Floyd Traynham, Jr. of the Hermanson Fencing School was second and Charles Blair, of the U. of C., was third.

NORTH SHORE FENCING ACADEMY

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Hanns Fischer, Director
Eugene C. Williams, Associate

Also affiliated with:

ARMSTRONG-REED STUDIOS
1543 W. Morse Ave.

McDOWELL STUDIO
5519 Broadway

WILSON Y. M. C. A.
1725 Wilson Ave.

Address: HANNS FISCHER

5871 North Glenwood Ave. Chicago, Ill

A. F. L. A. COMPETITIONS IN NEW YORK CITY

The Individual Novice Epee Competition, held at the Saltus Fencing Club on December 2nd, was won by H. Kane of N. Y. U. S. Cantor, also of N. Y. U., was second, and James Strauch of C. C. N. Y., was third. There were 20 contestants in the competition.

The Individual Novice Foil Competition was held at the Salle Santelli on December 7th. It attracted 55 contestants and was won by Ralph Goldstein of the Metropolitan Fencing Club with Andre Deladrier of St. John's University, second, and Neil Lazar of C. C. N. Y., third.

The Metropolitan Junior Epee Championship was won by S. Gross of N. Y. U. over a field of 20 contestants. Ralph Goldstein of the Metropolitan Fencing Club was second and Wallace Goldsmith of the N. Y. A. C., was third. The contest was held at the Salle Santelli on December 8th.

Ralph Goldstein of the Metropolitan Fencing Club made another upward step in classification within a week of winning the Novice Foil competition by winning the Metropolitan Junior Foil Championship on December 14th at the Salle Santelli. There were 27 entrants in the contest. Albert Axelrod of the Salle Santelli was second, while Charles Steinhardt of St. John's University was third on touches over Nino Maniaci of the Saltus Fencing Club and Austin Prokop of the Salle Santelli.

The Locke Women's Junior Foil Competition attracted 34 contestants to compete for the special Dorothy Browne Locke awards this year. This prize competition was held on December 15th at the Greco Fencing Academy. Elizabeth Bruskin, fencing unattached, won first award with 4 wins and 1 loss in the finals. Miss Lisel Loewenherz of the Greco Fencing Academy was second with 3 wins and 2 losses and 13 touches against, while Lela Joggi of Hofstra College was third with 14 touches against and Bessie Aboulafia of the Foils Club was fourth with 15 touches against.

The N. Y. A. C. foil team of Warren Dow, Dernel Every, Silvio Giolito and John Huffman won the Cartier Open Foil Team Competition at the Saltus Fencing Club on December 16th and 19th. There were 10 teams in the contest and the winning team lost no match throughout the competition.

On December 21st, Edward Egan of the Saltus Fencing Club won the Metropolitan Junior Sabre Championship at the Salle Santelli over a field of 24 contestants. Jack Gorlin, Salle Santelli, won the silver medal over Anthony Lombardo of N. Y. U. on the basis of touches after they tied with 3 wins and 2 losses apiece in the finals.

Elizabeth Bruskin, unattached, was undefeated in the finals of the Women's Metropolitan Junior Foil Championship at the Fencers Club on December 22nd. Emily Hochoer of Salle d'Armes Henri IV won second place on touches over Mary Ann Harris of the Salle Santelli after they tied with 3 wins and 2 losses. There were 21 contestants in the championship.

The Voorhees Senior Women's Foil Competition attracted 19 competitors to the Fencers Club on January 4th. Madeline Dalton of the Salle d'Armes Vince won the gold Alice Wendt Voorhees medal with 7 wins and 1 loss in the finals. Dolly Funke of the Greco Fencing Academy took second medal over Dorothy Grimmelman of the Salle Santelli on the basis of touches.

WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

A full schedule of A. F. L. A. events has been planned for the Western Massachusetts division in 1941, far exceeding anything the division attempted last year. Fourteen competitions appear on the division's printed schedule, including men's prep foils, novice foil, sabre and epee, junior sabre, individual three-weapon, three-weapon team, all New England professional coaches invitation three-weapon tournament, all New England Y. M. C. A. open three-weapon tournament, and the first annual Western Massachusetts open outdoor all-weapon tournament for men and women.

Women's competitions will include a prep and novice foil, the Western Massachusetts women's team championship, and the division's open women's championship. In addition to these tournaments, the division will sponsor a "fencers' frolic" in March.

The Western Massachusetts Fencing Club, affiliated with the West Springfield Y. M. C. A., has also prepared a full schedule of men's and women's team matches that includes 12 women's competitions and 11 men's.

A program of fencing in the high schools of Springfield and West Springfield is being sponsored in 1941 by the Western Massachusetts group. Douglas P. Boyea, coach at Springfield College and the local Y. M. C. A. will supervise these activities. It is anticipated that fencing instructions will be given to 350 girls and 300 boys each week. A league among the schools will be formed in the spring, and the year climaxed with a high school tournament.

* * *

SIDELIGHTS AND COMMENTS

(Continued from page 5.)

There remains a great deal of work to be done in standardizing the various sectional championships. As Ferard Leicester wrote me some weeks ago, these events are more important to the great bulk of fencers than the nationals, because so few of the fencers have the time to go to the nationals. A lot has been done already to raise these events to the dignity which they rightfully deserve. More can be done. I shall take this up again when we deal specifically with the sectional championships.

All this cannot be accomplished overnight. The fact remains, however, that we are beginning to see the problem of classification in a national light. I think that we have taken significant steps toward its solution, and that—granted our rules are still far from perfect—we are on the right road.

One final point: The Rules Committee considered objections to the titles of our five basic classifications, especially to the words "junior" and "senior"—which have misleading age connotations in the popular mind. The suggestion was that "seniors" become "class A" or "class 1" fencers; "intermediates," "class B" or "class 2," and so on. There is considerable merit in this idea, and it is one of the items that we should like all fencers to keep in mind as a possible amendment in the future. Your Committee decided against a change at this time only because our present titles have been long established. We thought it best to wait until the general membership had had a chance to think about the possible change and perhaps find objections which had not occurred to us. As I said in my previous article, the real improvement in many of our rules must come from the fencers themselves. I therefore urge you again to take an active interest in the formulation of our future rules.